

“Solomon: The Wise King?”
Who’s the Boss? – A series on the Kings
1 Kings 11

Introduction:

- Take your Bibles and turn to 1 Kings 11, 1 Kings chapter 11.
- A small change in trajectory can greatly alter the outcome. The smallest change of the steering wheel of your car can greatly alter where the vehicle ends up in a matter of a few hundred feet. A slight turn of the barrel of a rifle determines whether or not the bulls eye is hit. For an Asiana Airlines flight trying to land at the San Francisco airport on July 6th the smallest change in trajectory meant that the plane hit the seawall surrounding the landing field instead of landing safely on the tarmac. A few feet of trajectory made all of the difference between landing safely and horrific tragedy.
- This is the story of Solomon’s life. Early in his life, he made some minor tweaks to his trajectory that made all the difference for how he landed the plane at the end of his life. As we will see in chapter 11, he crashed and burned at the end even though he had started so well in the beginning. When you look at Solomon’s life you cannot help but scratch your head and wonder, how in the world did we end up here? Here was a man who had everything. He had been appointed by the Lord to rule as the next King over Israel even though he was not the next in line for the throne. He was appointed by the Lord to be the one who would build the Lord a house on this Earth. He was granted the privilege to grow up with a Dad who was the man after God’s own heart. He was blessed with a sharp mind and wisdom beyond his years. He was asked by God what he would want and he asked for a discerning mind so as to lead God’s innumerable people. In response to that God blessed him with surpassing wisdom, and surprising riches, and a sure promise of long life. These promises then came true in his life as his influence of wisdom and wealth spread over all the world. At the end of chapter 10 his kingly reign is described like this in verse 23-25:
- With these unbelievable blessings from the Lord in mind, let’s read verses 1-13.
- There are so many universal principles and life-shaping truths that we must see in Solomon’s life. Not only was he a great teacher of wisdom through his many proverbs, he is also a great teacher of wisdom through his great failures. So, let’s approach the text this morning and try to diagnose the problem and then look for the solution.

I. The Problem

- a. What was it that turned Solomon’s life to a tragic end? What was it that brought him to this humiliating crash landing? The text is very instructive here in that it points us to Solomon’s heart. We are told in verse one that Solomon loved many foreign women. We are then told in verse 2 that even though this marriage to pagan women was against God’s Law that Solomon clung to these women in love. Then in verse three the connection is made that these women turned Solomon’s heart away after other gods and his heart was not wholly true to the Lord. And then in verses 9-10 we are told that God was angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the Lord and he did not keep what the Lord commanded. So, there is the diagnosis. He is in trouble late in life because he has a heart problem. He has loved the wrong things and he has not singularly loved the one thing that he was commanded to love. But this has not always been the case for Solomon. We are told in chapter 3 that Solomon is a man who

loved the Lord. In fact, he loved the Lord in such a way that he walked in all the statutes of his father David. He also responded to the Lord's inquiry by asking for a discerning mind so that he could more effectively fill the position in God's Kingdom that he had been so graciously given, rather than asking for something that would simply serve himself. This love for the Lord plays out in his reign in that he exercised wise oversight over all his people and he led the nation to the apex of its existence with wealth untold, peace on every side, and nations clamoring to be an ally of Israel. Solomon also loved the Lord so much that he followed through on the exquisite plans of building the Temple to the point where this earthly dwelling place of God was overlaid with gold. At the dedication of the Temple Solomon also showed this great love when he led the nation in sacrificing an uncountable number of animal sacrifices, and then prayed a prayer of dedication that sought God's eternal blessing upon his people and his temple. So, we see that the first 10 chapters of Solomon's life are filled with expressions of love for God.

- b. But then there is this contrasting conjunction at the beginning of verse 1 – “Now.” Things had been going well, but *now* there is a different tune to the life of Solomon. We have seen ten chapters of his life, but we have one more to go, and as long as there is still time left in life there is still time for things to change, and change they do! But why does this happen? We know that the problem is that he left his first love and this resulted in a major heart problem that invoked the swift judgment of the Lord. But why did this happen? The answer to this question proves to be very instructive for us as we seek to diagnose our own hearts and try to prevent our own crash landing.
- c. As you look at Solomon's life you can begin to detect that Solomon was deceived into believing several myths that wore down his defenses and eased up his commitment to the Lord. These myths that deceived Solomon were subtle myths of real life that so easily prey upon our own hearts as well. This 11th chapter of Solomon's life seems almost unimaginable when considered in light of the first 10, but when deception enters in, nothing is impossible.
- d. The Myth of Compromise – 3:1; 11:1-3
 - i. At the heart of Solomon's heart problem was the myth of compromise. It was eluded to earlier in chapter 3 where we were told that Solomon had made a marriage alliance with Egypt by marrying the Pharaoh's daughter. The text says nothing then about whether or not this was right or wrong, but here in chapter 11 we have the rest of the story. We are told that Solomon not only married Pharaoh's daughter, but he also married 700 other princess wives and he also had 300 concubines. In our modern Western world this custom has fallen out of fashion for political leaders, but in Solomon's day it was big business. If you were a king of a country or the political leader of a city-state and you wanted to craft a treaty or alliance or peace agreement with another nation you would often offer a daughter to be given in marriage to the ruler of the land. This would solidify your countries relationship with that country and it would give you an inside track to keeping the peace with that nation in the future. It was a subtle and effective way of getting a voice inside the throne room of a neighboring nation. It was pretty typical then for nations of the Ancient Middle East to have large harems of wives and concubines, and the larger your harem the larger your influence. If you had 25 wives that most likely meant that you had 25 nations or political powers who wanted to have some kind of positive relationship with you and your country. This is astounding then to think of the worldwide influence that Solomon, and therefore Israel had. He had 1000 political entities of some sort from around the globe that wanted to have some kind of positive

relationship with him and his kingdom. This is another testament to the worldwide influence of this wise king and how the nations of the world were clamoring to be rightly connected to him.

- ii. But these relationships are not simply political and therefore benign to Solomon's heart. While they may have started as politically motivated marriages that is not where they ended up. The text is clear here. Solomon loved these women, and Solomon clung to these women in love. Who knows what Solomon's motivations were at the beginning of these many marriages. Maybe he saw some political advantage, or even necessity that drew him to disregard the clear word of God on this matter. Maybe he saw some strategic benefit as letter after letter poured into the regal mail room asking for Solomon to consider this woman and that woman from various faraway lands. Whatever the motivation was, at the heart of it all was a willingness on Solomon's part to compromise on the clear revelation of God's will. God had clearly told the Israelites in Exodus 34 and Deuteronomy 7 that they were not to take foreign women as their wives because this would lead to their own idolatry. Solomon himself was instructed in Deuteronomy 17 to write his own copy of the first five books of the Old Testament as a way to learn how he should govern God's people as their king and lead them to obey God's law. In this Law of God that Solomon copied he most certainly would have paid special attention to the section in Deuteronomy 17 where it gives clear instruction about God's will for Israel's king that he must not acquire many wives for himself lest his heart turn away.
- iii. But somewhere along the way, Solomon was deceived into thinking that it was okay to compromise God's clearly commanded will. As you read the book of Ecclesiastes I think you see the words of a man who is full of holy regret and righteous remorse over how he has finished his course. Had he known the full consequence of his compromise, I do not think he would have done it. But this is part of the allure of compromise. We don't know where it will end, but we see the immediate benefit. We can't see 20 years from now, but we can see the right here and right now. Solomon and his kingdom were certainly benefited immediately by these marriage alliances. But the long term damage of compromise could not be seen until the long term played out. What brought Solomon immediate success and fame and widespread influence also brought Solomon eternal shame and the just judgment of the God of Heaven.
- iv. Solomon's heart slowly drifted from a singular love of the Lord through this myth of compromise. He bought into the thought that he could compromise here or there and not be hurt by it in the long run. He bought into the myth that he could handle the pressures that compromise would bring. He bought into the myth that his way was better than God's because while God's will was for him not to do this, certainly a little tweak here or there to God's will won't make too much of a difference.
- v. We do this too don't we? We compromise God's clearly revealed will by tweaking it here or there for some immediate benefit. So for instance, we might know that God's will for us is that we flee from all sexual immorality, but we compromise with His will a little bit by watching a movie or TV show that has sexual immorality in it. Or we might know that God's will for us is to bridle our tongues so that we don't speak blessings and cursings out of the same mouth, but we compromise with His will by growing lax in our language and speaking about other people in ungodly ways. The list of application could go on and on, but the point is that compromise is not okay. It is not okay to know God's will and not to do it. Now certainly, every one of God's children will struggle to do all of

God's will that they know. That is why we are described as a project in Philippians 1 that the Lord will complete. But being a project, and intentionally compromising are two different things. Solomon was not perfect in chapter 3, but he did love the Lord. Solomon is a compromiser by chapter 11 and he no longer loved the Lord like he ought to, but rather he clung to foreign women because he now loved them. His descent can be linked to his compromise.

e. The Myth of Ease

- i. His descent can also be linked to his ease. It is in the later years of his life, after all of the projects are done and the kingdom is at the apex of its success, that Solomon is described as loving many foreign women. Does this sound familiar? His father David had this same problem. When David was dodging spears thrown by Saul, and hiding in caves, and fighting for the establishment of the kingdom he did pretty well spiritually. But then came the Spring that he decided to not go out to war. The Kingdom was doing well and this battle was basically in the bag and so he stayed back and enjoyed the ease and comfort of his own success. And then boom – here comes the temptation of Bathsheeba and the fall into life-altering sin. And now here is Solomon. The nation is doing better than it ever has before. They are in the land that God promised. Their borders reach farther than at any other time, before or since. They have the largest army in the world with no need to use it because every other nation has made peace with them. Gold is so prominent in Jerusalem that silver becomes a by-word. Their God has a gold-plated Temple built for Him that stands out as one of the wonders of the Ancient world. Solomon has built his own house and restored the city of Jerusalem and many other cities in the nation. Things are good, and then whammo – here comes the problem!
- ii. Sure Solomon had been marrying these women throughout his reign, but we are told here that in the last chapter of his life is when they started to turn his heart away from the Lord. Somehow, for the first years of his reign he avoided this snare, but then when the life of ease and relaxation set in is when the problems came. When the projects were done and the push to lead and build and conquer were over, then came the opportunity for Solomon's heart to be turned away from the Lord.
- iii. This is counter intuitive for us. We think that ease and relaxation are some of the top-drawer experiences of life. In fact our society has been crafted with late in life ease and relaxation in mind. Whole investing schemes have been built upon the premise of retiring early and enjoying the luxurious fruit of your labors. We have made an art out of pursuing ease in our culture, especially later in life.
- iv. From the life of Solomon I must speak a word of caution to our retirement age folks. Beware, be on guard, be alert! Ease and relaxation are the seed beds of all kinds of idolatry. When you ease up on the pedal of life you are opening your heart up to all kinds of temptations that have the potential to turn you away from the Lord, just like Solomon. Sure the young in our church need our attention and our care and our call to them to follow Christ, but so do you. Sure we can get excited about seeing a young life shaped by the truths of God's Word and the glorious Gospel of Christ, but we can also get excited about delivering a faithful saint into the hands of the Lord after they have completed a life of singular devotion to Christ. So my dear brother or sister, as you age you most certainly will have to ease up on the pedal a bit. You might have to shift into a lower gear and it may take you more time to get up the hill, but don't take your foot off of the accelerator! Don't let up and buy into the myth of ease that says that relaxation is where

it is at. No, faithfulness to Christ is where it is at. Past success is no guarantee of future success. Don't let up now! Solomon ruined his legacy and brought countless miseries on his family and untold reproach on the name of God because he bought into the myth of ease.

f. The Myth of Knowledge – 4:29-34; 11:6

- i. He also was a victim of the myth of knowledge. Solomon knew more about life and about God's world than any other human outside of Jesus Christ. He solved difficult issues of justice, ruled over a nation that rose to world prominence, oversaw the building of amazing structures, managed vast amounts of wealth, brought peace where once there was war, dazzled world leaders with his insight and wisdom, and explained the finest of details about natural science to enquiring minds. He spoke 3,000 proverbs and penned 1005 songs. This man was full of knowledge and wisdom. He knew what was what and he knew how to live according to what was what. And yet, here we are at the end of his life watching him disintegrate and play the part of a fool. How does this happen?
- ii. Well, Solomon's life teaches us that knowing the truth does not guarantee keeping the truth. Knowledge alone is not the answer. Many social action groups would disagree as they make their way into schools and show educational films about how the use of drugs can fry your brain like an egg in a skillet. You would think that the natural response to this education would be to "just say no" to drugs. And yet, illegal street drugs are just as or even more popular now than they have ever been. Surely education has helped, but education alone is not the answer.
- iii. This also shows us that the truth is not dependent upon the teacher of the truth. Solomon had many wise and true things to say. The books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon are prime examples of the God-inspired truth that came from Solomon's mouth. And yet, here we are at the end of his life watching him live in ways that are contrary to the very truths that he proclaimed. This does not mean that the truth is now invalid because the life of the adherent does not match up to the truth. Many people have said that they don't like the church because it is full of hypocrites, and therefore they will not come to church because the people who speak the truth don't live the truth. Believe me, we must live the truth that we proclaim, but the message of the truth is not dependent upon my ability to live according to it. The message of the Gospel will always be truth whether or not I walk worthy of that Gospel. This is true of Solomon's life. While we scratch our heads as we watch his demise in chapter 11, we can also greatly benefit from the Godly wisdom that saturates Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. The truth is not dependent upon its adherents, and knowledge of the truth is no guarantee of living a life conformed to the truth. Solomon's life illustrates the myth of knowledge.

g. The Myth of Plurality – 11:5, 7-8

- i. He also fell prey to the myth of plurality. In Solomon's life polygamy led to polytheism. He had many wives and these many wives turned his heart away from singular worship. This myth goes hand in hand with the myth of compromise, but it is also different. Solomon was led into plurality through compromise. He altered his loyalty to the clearly revealed will of God and this left him open to pluralism. Because he willingly tampered with singular allegiance to God's Word and will, his heart was led to tamper with allegiance to this one God.

- ii. This pluralism was not a problem for any of Solomon's wives. None of them came into the kingdom and demanded that all other gods be abandoned because the god of their homeland was the only true god. That is because no other god in the world demands singular allegiance. This is the myth of pluralism. It says that everyone can be right in their own eyes, and believe me this is not unique to our age. It has been the long standing majority opinion of the people of the world that you can worship who you want to worship and I can worship who I want to worship and we can even mix those together and worship multiple gods. This is the mentality that Solomon's many wives and concubines brought into the most intimate part of his life. This is what changed his heart. Polygamy led to pluralism.
- iii. This is a most interesting connection. God demands total allegiance to Him and to his ways. Part of his ways demands total allegiance to one spouse for life as he clearly defined in Genesis 2 when he created Eve for Adam and decreed that this is how it will forever be. The man will leave his father and mother and will cling to his one wife and these two will become one flesh. When a husband or wife clings to that one spouse for a lifetime they are mirroring the kind of singular devotion they are to have to the God of Heaven. Marriage is the most pertinent real life context for us to show our singular devotion to God. We have the everyday occurrence in a marriage relationship to show to our spouse the kind of devotion that we are supposed to have to God. Therefore marriage creates a living parable to those around us that speaks in living color about our singular devotion to the God who has decreed how it should be.
- iv. Solomon compromised on this by marrying more than one woman. He opened up his heart to another wife to love her and to cherish her and to provide for her. He opened up his will to commit to her for a lifetime, and as soon as he did this he compromised his devotion to his first wife. Through the marriage to his second wife, to say nothing of wife 699, Solomon made it clear to his first wife that his devotion to her was a pluralistic devotion. And at that point we must ask, is a pluralistic devotion any kind of devotion at all? One wonders what kind of trust and intimacy can really be fostered in a relationship between a husband and wife that is shared by 699 other women, not to mention the other 300 lesser commitments known as concubines. There is no true devotion here, and this lack of devotion in the marital relationship opened up the heart of Solomon to the worship of other gods. Because he had abandoned singular devotion to the will of God, and singular devotion to his one wife, he was now a prime target for the myth of pluralism. After all, it was working wasn't it? His kingdom was going well, and his many wives were a token to the vast influence of this world power. Pluralistic marriage must have been okay because the results were pretty fantastic. But at the heart of the matter was a heart that was drifting away from singular love of the one true God to pluralistic worship of many gods. Solomon did not just oblige his wives various forms of worship by building them whatever they wanted as far as a shrine went, but he also joined them in going after Ashtoreth and after Milcom as it says in verse 5. Compromise led to pluralism. Allowance paved the way for participation. Solomon fell prey to the myth of pluralism.
- v. Solomon was once a great leader of amazing expressions of sacrificial worship to the one true God. Don't you remember the 1,000 sacrifices that he made regularly at Gibeon, and the 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep that were offered at the dedication of the Temple? And yet, here he is a few chapters later participating in the worship of a pagan deity and

explicitly breaking the first 2 commandments of God's Law. Compromise led to pluralism, and this pluralistic worship was brazenly done in light of God's clear command of the consequence. When our hearts are drawn away from the Lord and we begin to worship an idol we do so in the face of God's clearly revealed consequence. Solomon knew what the Lord had said, and yet here he is participating in the worship of a false god. Solomon also knew the one true God very personally. God had appeared to him 2 times and his word from those encounters had proven true. And yet, here he is participating in the worship of a false god. This is because he has been led into the myth of pluralism through the myth of compromise.

- vi. So, Solomon's life proves that compromise may be expedient in the immediate, it is deadly in the long run. Solomon's life proves that ease and relaxation are more dangerous than they appear. His life proves that knowledge alone is not the solution to keep us from crash landing. Solomon's life proves that compromise leads to pluralism which will be seen in idolatrous worship. In the face of known consequences and real experiences with the one true God, our hearts can easily be led to idolatrous worship if we are drawn into these myths. So, how do we avoid falling prey to these myths?

II. The Solution

- a. What is the solution to this great heart problem that Solomon had? Well, we must be careful here because we are dealing with a narrative text which is telling us the facts about what happened at the end of Solomon's life. These are not just the bare facts with no message because as we commented last week, in the book of 1-2 Kings you have over 400 years of history in just a little over 50,000 words. To put that in perspective, one of my sermons is typically about 5,000 words long, which means that the writer of the books of 1-2 Kings is telling 400 years of Israel's history in a matter of about 10 sermons. This is a relatively short amount of space to cram in 400+ years of events. So, this means that the things that are included are included for a reason. They are here on purpose to communicate something to us. All of the events included tell us not only the key events, but they also communicate to us some of the key principles and themes of God's working among men. And so very rarely in a narrative do you have prescription given. In other words, we don't come to the end of chapter 11 and the writer says, "now here is what you should learn from Solomon, and here is what you should change in your life today because of what you see here in his life." So, this means that we must carefully interpret and apply the narrative of Solomon's life to our own. So, what do we learn from Solomon and how does this help us know how to live today? Of the many things we could say from the text in this area of solution to the problem, the main thing we must say is that we must maintain a singular love of God.
- b. Singular Love of God
 - i. This was at the heart of Solomon's heart problem. He crash landed at the end because he left his first love. He got caught in believing the myths and disbelieving God, even though he knew better. He himself has said in Proverbs 4:23 – Guard your heart with all diligence, for out of it flow the issues of life. Jesus amplified this point in Matthew 15 when he makes it known that the food that goes into a person is not what defiles a person, but rather it is what flows out of the heart that defiles a person. We operate in life from our heart, and by the use of this word "heart" the Scriptures mean the core of our being or who we really are. Solomon's heart was turned to love something other than God and this resulted in a crash and burn ending to his life. So to avoid the crash and burn ending we must guard our hearts by singularly loving God. This is all nice and good

to say, but what does it mean? What does it mean to have a singular love of God? Well, again from the text, it means that we must fight the myths of unbelief.

ii. Which means that:

1. We must fight the myths of unbelief

- a. At some point Solomon stopped fighting against the myths. There is a great war raging all around us over what is true and what is false. Jesus said that the truth will set us free, and so we must know what is true. How do we know what is true? We know what is true by what God has said. Solomon knew what was true by what God had revealed to him in his word. Solomon knew that it was true that he should not have many foreign wives. Solomon knew that it was true that he was to worship no other god but the one true God. Solomon knew that it was true that he was to have no graven or carved image that he worshiped. Solomon knew that it was true that he was not to amass horses unto himself as the King of God's people.
- b. But Solomon stopped fighting against the myths of unbelief. His relatively small compromise of God's will at the beginning put him on a trajectory of major compromise in the end. He believed the lie that he could tamper just a little bit with God's clearly revealed truth and be okay. He believed the lie that God wouldn't really follow through with the consequences that were promised. He believed the lie that past experience and present knowledge was enough to keep him from catastrophic failure. He believed the lie that past success would carry him through to the end. He believed the lie that he could join himself with polytheists and not be harmed by their pluralistic worship.
- c. We must not do this. When we feel the waves of doubt and disbelief start to crash on the shores of our life we must get dressed for battle by putting on the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the belt of truth, the shield of faith, the shoes of the Gospel of peace, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. We must not entertain the lies of the world, the flesh, and the devil. We must not let our guard down. We must fight against these myths that surround us and attack us.
- d. Where are you prone to compromise the truth? Where are you prone to believe the lies that surround you? Is your heart particularly drawn to the materialism of our age? Is your heart drawn to personal pride? Is your heart drawn to individualism and independence? Is your heart drawn to entertainment and its many alluring lusts? Is your heart drawn to the sexual immorality that dominates our world? Is your heart drawn to power and prestige? Where do you feel the tug of the flesh, the world, and the devil on your heart? Are you waging war against these myths, or are you entertaining their venomous words? We must have a singular love for God by fighting the myths of unbelief. We must daily battle their lies so that we don't crash and burn.

2. We must cling to the truth about God

- a. We must also have a singular love for God in a way that clings to the truth about God. The story of the end of Solomon's life is more about God than

it is about Solomon. Sadly, we are not all that surprised to read that it happened this way with God's king. We have seen it before in the human race. Adam in the Garden with everything perfect, with daily communion with God, and with every need met, and yet he rebels against God. David in the blessed position as God's King over God's innumerable people in God's Promised Land. And yet, he rebels against God. And so now, Solomon, in all of his glory and splendor, the recipient of unbelievable and unimaginable blessing from the Lord, and yet he rebels against God. Lest we be full of pride, we see it so well in the text because we know it so well in our own heart. We are not surprised to read of Solomon's crash landing because we know the potential of our own sin filled heart that regularly operates according to these many myths that tripped up Solomon. So, thankfully, there is more to 1 Kings 11 than just Solomon, and the more to be had in the chapter is all about God. This then I think is a key to keeping our hearts singularly devoted to this One True God. We must cling to the truth about who he is. If we will see Him for who He truly is then we will be drawn to Him as the only One worth loving singularly and supremely.

- b. He is Sovereign – 11:14; 11:23; 11:29-39
 - i. I want to point you quickly to 4 truths about who God is that will strengthen your singular love for Him. After verse 13 in the chapter we are told about three different men that God raised up as adversaries against Solomon. In verse 14 we read, “And the Lord raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite.” Edom was a territory in the Southern part of Solomon's kingdom that David and Joab had at one time almost completely obliterated. But God allowed one from the royal line of Edom to escape to Egypt where he was nurtured and empowered, and when he heard that David was dead he left and returned to Edom. Now that Solomon has proven in his old age that his heart has turned from the Lord, the Lord uses Hadad as an adversary against Solomon.
 - ii. Then in verse 23 we read that God also raised up as an adversary to Solomon Rezon. He had been the leader of a raiding band who had eventually taken up residence in Damascus and became king over Syria. Syria is in the northern part of the kingdom of Solomon.
 - iii. Then in verses 29-39 we are told that God had used his prophet, Ahijah, to tell Jeroboam that he would one day rule over 10 of the 12 tribes of Israel because God would tear it from Solomon's son because of Solomon's sin. Jeroboam was a key worker for Solomon and Solomon had put him in charge of all of the forced labor of the house of Joseph. So, Solomon has an adversary from the south, from the north, and from within. These adversaries exist because God is sovereignly working to bring them against Solomon. You will not read phrases like this in the newspaper or on your favorite news website. We don't tell history by saying, and God raised up this leader and that leader to do this and that. We cannot always

pinpoint what God is doing in His sovereign work in this world, but the writer of 1 Kings had an inside track and he knew from the clear revelation of God that God was at work to raise up adversaries to Solomon.

c. He is Faithful

- i. The fact that God was sovereignly at work to raise up adversaries for Solomon goes to show that God is faithful. 1 Kings 11 is all about God's faithfulness to His Word. Yahweh God is simply applying the truths of the Davidic Covenant to Solomon's life in chapter 11. God had made clear what would happen if one of David's sons did not follow all of his ways and walk in singular worship of Him, and so now in chapter 11 this word is coming true. God is so consistent! He is so faithful to be who he has always been. So his sovereign raising up of adversaries is the application of faithfulness to His word. He is sovereign and he is faithful.

d. He Refuses to Settle

- i. He is also a God who refuses to settle for less. Solomon was almost good enough in his reign over God's people. The kingdom was at its apex of physical and temporal power. Nations from around the world were hearing of the fame of God's people and God's king, and therefore of God himself. Solomon's reign was almost good enough. And this is where the problem was. Solomon had most things right, but he missed one crucial thing – singular devotion to Yahweh God. Because of this, God willingly and powerfully tears the Kingdom from David's line at the apex of its achievement because almost good enough wasn't enough for God.
- ii. What if he hadn't done this? Wouldn't He have been clearly endorsing that a polytheistic kingdom was ok? Wouldn't he have been allowing all people of the earth to believe that the pluralistic worship that abounded in Solomon's kingdom was okay? Well, it wasn't okay. Molech is not God. Ashtoreth is not God. Chemosh is not God. Yahweh is God alone. These other entities are manmade idols backed by demonic forces of evil, but they are not the one true God. There is only one God, and that God is Yahweh God. And this one God had one people with one king who was to maintain their one allegiance to the one true God. When they didn't, God refused to overlook it because to overlook it would have been to approve it. For the sake of the truth about himself, God refuses to settle with a kingdom that is almost good enough, and God intervenes through Sovereign Judgment for the sake of His promise. Had he not intervened in this situation through his judgment then his promise would be null and void. He would have violated his own word and in violating his own word, the rest of the words would have proven to be inconsequential. But he didn't! He kept his Word!

Conclusion: How could we not singularly love a God like this? No other entity that our hearts are drawn to worship are like this one true God. He is sovereign, he is faithful, and he will not settle for less. In fact, he is so faithful to his word that he sent his own Son to become a son of Adam so that he could keep his promise. In verse 39 Ahijah the prophet proclaims to Jeroboam that if he will follow the Lord with his whole heart then his house will be established and the house of David will be afflicted because of this, and then there is this glorious Gospel phrase at the end of the verses – but not forever. God will not forever afflict the offspring of David because God has made an unalterable plan that has produced an undeniable promise. A Son of David will rule on the throne forever and forever! God is sovereignly faithful to His word and he will not settle for less than the perfect kingdom for His people that he has planned. Therefore he sent Jesus to this Earth to live as a Son of Adam. This Jesus lived in perfect obedience to the Father, and therefore is the rightful King of all. And yet, this rightful King gave his life so that we could enter this perfect kingdom. He who knew no sin became sin for us so that we could be participants in His gloriously eternal reign over all things. Will you be there? Has Jesus' blood cleansed you from you sin? If you will be there, are you living today with a commitment to a singular love for God? How could we not love a God like this?! Let's pray.